

The Book being explained by the *Sunna*, and what has been transmitted about that

Allah says, “*And We have sent down the Reminder to you so that you can make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them*” (16:44), and “*Those who oppose his command should beware of a testing trial coming to them or a painful punishment striking them*” (24:63) and “*Truly you are guiding to a Straight Path.*” (42:52) It is made obligatory to obey the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in more than one *āyat* of the Book and that is connected to obeying Allah, Allah says, “*Whatever the Messenger gives you you should accept and whatever He forbids you you should forgo.*” (59:7) Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr mentioned that ‘Abdu’r-Raḥmān ibn Yazīd saw a *muḥrim* wearing his ordinary clothes and he forbade him to do that. The man said to him, “Bring me an *āyat* from the Book of Allah which removes my clothes.” He recited to him, “*Whatever the Messenger gives you you should accept and whatever He forbids you you should forgo.*” (59:7) Hishām ibn Ḥujayr said, “Ṭāwūs prayed two *rak‘āts* after ‘Aṣr and Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘Stop performing them.’” He said, ‘It is only forbidden to take them as a *sunna*.’ Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, forbade praying after ‘Aṣr. I do not know whether you will be punished or rewarded for them because Allah says, “*When Allah and His Messenger have decided a thing it is not for any believing man or believing woman to have a choice about it.*” (33:36)’”

Abū Dāwūd related from al-Miqdām ibn Ma‘dīkarib that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “I was given the Book and its like with it. It will not be long

before a satiated man on his throne declares, ‘This Qur’ān is all you need. Make lawful whatever you find lawful in it and make unlawful whatever you find unlawful in it.’ But domestic donkeys are not lawful for you nor is eating any beast of prey with fangs nor is something dropped by someone who has a treaty with you until its owner declares himself free of it. If someone stops off with some people, they must give him hospitality. If they do not, he can legally pursue them for the equivalent cost of his due hospitality.”

Al-Khaṭṭābī said that the words, “I was given the Book and its like with it,” can be interpreted in two ways. One is that it means he was given hidden revelation which is not recited in the same way that he was given the outward recited part. The second is that he was given the Book as recited revelation and was given clarification like it, meaning permission to explain what was in the Book, making it general and specific, adding to it and legislating what is in it. Therefore it is mandatory to act by that and to accept it like the outward recited Qur’ān. The *ḥadīth* is a warning against opposing those established *sunan* which are not in the Qur’ān, as was done by the Khārijites and Rāfiḍites. They attached themselves to the literal text of the Qur’ān and abandoned the *sunnas* which contain the clarification of the Book. This *ḥadīth* contains evidence that there is no need to compare the *ḥadīth* with the Book. Whatever is confirmed as being from the Prophet is evidence in itself. As for what some relate, “When a *ḥadīth* comes to you, compare it with the Book. If it agrees with it, take it. Otherwise, discard it,” it is a baseless false *ḥadīth*.

The clarification is of two types: a general clarification of the Book, like clarifying the five prayers, their times, prostration, *rukū’* and all their rulings, the amount and time of *zakāt* and the types of property from which it is taken, and the details of the practices of *ḥajj*. When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, performed the *ḥajj* with the people, he said, “Take your practices from me,” and he said, “Pray as you saw me praying.” (al-Bukhārī) ‘Imrān ibn Ḥusayn said to a man, “You stupid man! Do you find *Zuhr* in the Book of Allah as four *rak‘ats*

in which recitation is not aloud?” Then he enumerated for him the prayer, *zakāt* and the like and then said, “Do you find this explained in the Book of Allah? The Book of Allah Almighty did not define this while the *Sunna* explains it!”

Al-Awzā‘ī reported that Ḥassān ibn ‘Aṭiyya said, “Revelation descended on the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and Jibrīl brought him the *Sunna* which explains that.” ... Al-Awzā‘ī also reported that Makḥūl said, “The Qur’ān is more in need of the *Sunna* than the *Sunna* is of the Qur’ān.” Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr said, “The *Sunna* judges the Book and the Book does not judge the *Sunna*.” Al-Fuḍayl ibn Ziyād said that he heard Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal being asked about this *ḥadīth* and he said, ‘I am not so bold as to say it, but I say that the *Sunna* explains and clarifies the Book.’”